

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Flame Engineering

Mid-America Manufacturing Technology Center

Flame Engineering Reduces Inventory with Lean Manufacturing

Client Profile:

Flame Engineering, of LaCrosse, Kansas, manufactures propane gas products for industrial, commercial and agricultural markets. Its Red Dragon product line is sold throughout the United States and internationally. Founded in 1973, the company currently employs 40 people.

Situation:

Flame Engineering continuously looks for new ways to improve its efficiency and its ability to respond to customer demand. The company set a goal for becoming a Lean Enterprise to reduce inventory, streamline its customer order process and minimize waste. Flame Engineering contacted the Mid-America Manufacturing Technology Center (MAMTC), a NIST MEP affiliate, for help.

Solution:

MAMTC conducted Lean 101 training for employees including a live simulation of an electronics factory. The sessions introduced the participants to the language and concepts of Lean Manufacturing. MAMTC then directed the company through a two day Value Stream Mapping (VSM) exercise of the manufacturing processes. During a VSM, a current state map is compared to a future state map to uncover any non-value-added steps. The company, with assistance from MAMTC, began to make changes based on the results of the VSM using Lean concepts and techniques including cellular manufacturing. MAMTC then led the company through 5S training. 5S, which stands for sorting, storage, shining, standardizing and sustaining, is a system to improve and standardize the work environment for safe and effective operation. Establishing an organized workplace is essential to begin creating lean manufacturing cells.

Results:

- * Anticipated \$30,000 reduction in inventory.
- * Anticipated reduction in materials by \$25,000.
- * Trained employees on the concepts of Lean.

Testimonial:

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